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I-WU HSIEN REQUESTS DEVELOPMENT LOAN:
NEW TURKI-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER TO BE PUBLISHED

I-WU HSIEN REQUESTS LOAN -- Sinkiang Jih-pao, 3 Mar 49

I-wu district was changed in 1943 from a She-chih-chu (Uda: 10928, 6055, 2480), provisional government status, to that of a regular hsien. It is a vast area with a total population of only 3,300. More than 80 percent are Uighurs with the Kazakhs forming a small minority. Leading a poverty-stricken life, the Uighurs are honest and accomplished in singing, dancing, and craftsmanship. They have preserved the morality of a nomadic civilization.

Of strategic importance in national defense because of its location in the triangle formed by the boundaries of Kansu, Mongolia and Sinkiang, I-wu Hsien is economically destitute. Arable land is limited due to the lack of irrigation facilities. Grazing ground for livestock is also scarce because of recurring natural calamities in recent years.

Prior to 1926, it was the largest livestock-raising area in eastern Sinkiang. Its annual food crop was more than its population could consume and the residue was transported for the supply of neighboring regions. The summer flood of 1937 impoverished I-wu Hsien still more when 200 li (one li is one-third of a mile) of farm land along the T'u-hu-lu Ho were inundated and four-tenths of the rich soil in Mao-mao-hu, located downstream and known as the most productive section of the hsien, was buried under sediment.

During 1944-45, tremors were felt throughout the hsien. Volcanic fire from A-erh-t'ai Shan reached the borders of Chen-hsi and I-wu. Under such extremely unsettled conditions, loss of livestock reached 37 percent. Since 1944, agricultural production has steadily declined. Each year financial aid from the government was required. The situation worsened in 1948 when adverse climatic factors reduced the total agricultural yield of I-wu Hsien to just a little over 6,900 shih (one shih is 2.24 bushels) while the annual

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consumption required was over 9,600 shih.

In the face of these difficulties, the T-wu Hsien administration has, besides requesting a loan to the farmers of the entire stock of grain and food reserved for famine, sent separate petitions to the Administrative District, the Social Affairs Department, and the Provincial Government to grant a loan of 200 million gold yuan to benefit spring planting, irrigation, animal husbandry, and economic reconstruction.

NEW TURKI-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER -- Erik, 9 Mar 49

Fourteen members of the Altay Correspondents' Fellowship (Altay Mukhabarlik Uyi) of the Eighth Administrative District in Sinkiang met in K'u-erh-lo on 9 March and decided to publish their own Turki-language newspaper to be called Aqartish [possible English renditions: Dawn, Enlightenment, or Honest Press].

The principal function of the association has been to disseminate news concerning the district's activities to various Turki-language newspapers in the province.

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